

REMARKS

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's thorough consideration provided the present application. Claims 1-7 are now present in the application. Claims 8, 10-13 and 16 have been cancelled. Claim 1 is independent. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that claims 1-7 are allowed. Applicant greatly appreciates the indication of allowable subject matter by the Examiner. As the Examiner will note, in view of the foregoing amendments, all pending claims should be allowable.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 8 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fukutani, U.S. Patent No. 5,998,898, in view of Kuwayama, U.S. Patent No. 5,874,793. Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fukutani in view of Kuwayama, and further in view of Komatsu, U.S. Patent No. 5,763,344. Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fukutani in view of Kuwayama, and further in view of Davies, U.S. Patent No. 4,865,922. Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka, U.S. Patent No. 6,712,513, in view of Kuwayama. Claim 16 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka in view of Kuwayama, and further in view of Komatsu. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As the Examiner will note, claims 8, 10-13 and 16 have been cancelled for the purpose of expediting the patent prosecution. Applicant respectfully submits that these rejections have been obviated and/or rendered moot. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103 are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

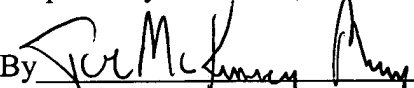
It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action, and that as such, the Examiner is respectfully requested to send the application to Issue.

In the event there are any matters remaining in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact Joe McKinney Muncy, Registration No. 32,334 at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: January 9, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

By 

Joe McKinney Muncy
Registration No.: 32,334

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Road
Suite 100 East
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000
Attorney for Applicant

